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exceptions, for all excepting Laxd. and Sn.E. where, for some reason, a considerable number of vocables are not covered. I noted, Laxd.: *sveipa af* 'to toss off', *gera at* 'to make much of', *gør* 'flock' (not only in poetry), *fættiliga* 'timidly'; *brautgangr* in the sense of 'divorce', *kviðustaðr* 'reason for anxiety', *forystulauss* in sense of 'without leader', *glæðel* 'sword'. Sn. E.: *hræring* in the sense of 'emotion', *elding* in the sense of 'luminous body', *silkeiræma* 'silk-ribbon' and likewise the simplex *ræma*, *máttak* 'diction', and the following mistakes: *hallmæli* wrongly given as pluraletantum, *mannlíkan* (n) as feminine; *setberg* is not 'a seat-formed rock' but 'a battlemented mountain' (cf. Aasen sub *sete*), *sjávargang* (in the *Prologus*) means 'the Deluge', not 'high sea'. I note also that the cross-references are not worked out between the forms *sjór*, *sjár*, *sær*, *sjávar*-, so baffling to the beginner, and that only *frú* is given for the many variant forms of this word.

Fær., Heimskr., Vqls., Egilss., Stjórn, and Njála were found to be well covered, on the whole, with the following exceptions: Fær.: *bera ut* in the sense of 'to bury' is omitted. Heimskr.: *rætask* (*mun á bardaga*) reference to *reitast* lacking. Njála: *umbrot* is not pluraletantum, *vanfóli* 'vicious horse' and *ljósa-verk* 'dairy-work' are omitted. Vqls: *komast fótum undir sér* 'to become established' is found neither under *komast* nor under *fótr*; *aftmunr* 'superiority in strength' is omitted.

Hýmiskv. and *Helreið B.* are well treated, unless, indeed, we should animadvert on the curious practice of simply omitting hapax legomena and unexplained words of frequently read monuments, which was observed also in reading the prose texts. *Knía* should be referred to *knýja* with which it is evidently identical. *Hléðr* 'famous' is omitted. In conformity to the plan of the abridgment, kennings are taken up only in rare instances, though the principle of selection is not evident.

Omissions noted otherwise: *újafnask* 'to become unequal, iniquitous', *gørsamligr* 'altogether'.—No particular pains seem to have been taken to incorporate new explanations.

To mention only one salient example, *grésjárn* (with which the giant Hýmír closed his bundle, and against which the strength of Þórr is unavailing) is still translated by 'iron wire' when it was shown by Bugge to mean 'magic' iron, from O.Ir. *gres* 'art'.

A sketch of the declensions and conjugations, and a list of irregular forms, though by no means complete, render the work more useful.—The typography is neat. Only, one might desire broader margins, for notes and references. It would have been very helpful to use larger and stouter caption-numbers which would facilitate, as now the small Arabic numerals discourage, search until the exact idiom is found. In the same manner, heavier print for prepositions and adverbs as used with verbs would make for greater perspicacity. Cf. the four unbroken columns sub *taka*.

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The Commedia Dell'Arte; A Study in Italian Popular Comedy, by WINIFRED SMITH. New York: The Columbia University Press, 1912. 8vo., xv + 290 pp.

Let us not apologize for the "commedia dell'arte." If, as Dr. Smith affirms, "it contributed nothing to the spiritual advance of mankind," it did something equally important: it created the art just as it inspired the genius of the most living dramatist of the old régime. The deeper we go into the sources of Goldoni's art, the clearer it becomes that this great interpreter of Venetian life owes less and less to Molière and the other foreigners, and more and more to the "commedia dell'arte." Take any of Goldoni's most genial creations: if we say that here is something distinctly new on the Italian stage, something that bears the imprint of perfect artistry and indicates a seriousness of purpose constituting a "reform," we shall only be doing justice to a great and conscientious genius. But we have not said it all until we

note the intimate indissoluble relation that exists between Goldoni's best work and the dramatic tradition which he vitalized and then killed. Does Goldoni bring the comedy back into connection with character? The "commedia dell'arte" had never been divorced from character, save that it worked at random impulse and caught with caricature the salient trait, while Goldoni's art is meditative and penetrates to all the finer nuances. Or is it a question of play construction? None of Goldoni's comic motives are without their counterparts in the extemporized drama; rather he systematizes the materials he found already in use, enlarging their scope, developing their possibilities, giving unity and cumulative power to what had been detached and artificially juxtaposed. The reform of Goldoni is not a breaking away from the theory of the "commedia dell'arte" but a realization of its ideal.

In the history, then, of the "commedia dell'arte," Goldoni's rôle is much more than that casual episode which appears in Dr. Smith's study. In fact from Goldoni's theatre we can perhaps derive the best data that exist for seeing the extemporized play in actual operation; just as among his plays we find one of the best criticisms that have been made of the "commedia dell'arte." In ignoring the *Teatro comico* of Goldoni, Dr. Smith slighted one of her most suggestive possibilities. Here Goldoni, speaking not merely as the theoretician but as the practical workman, sympathetically defines the typical features of the contemporary Italian stage, interprets its spirit, reveals its powers and its limitations. The characteristics which he notes are so many categories for the historian to utilize in exposing the progressive development of this type of art: plot construction, variety of subject, realism of observation, morality, dialogue, *chiusette*, soliloquies, *rimproveri*, *concetti*, laments, tirades, *libri generici*, episodes, improvisation,—here are some of the questions that Goldoni raises in connection with the "commedia dell'arte." An orderly and comprehensive analysis of this *genre* could do no better than discuss these problems with Goldoni's outline as a point of departure.

In Dr. Smith's narrative there is a distinct

charm of manner and a certain brilliancy of conception. But what her exposition gains in *élan* entails a sacrifice in the relief given to interesting and essential questions of detail. In the justifiable desire to emphasize the general outlines of the history of the "commedia dell'arte," the most real problems on which definite light may be shed have a tendency to receive an incidental treatment that is never exhaustive and never concise. If it is a question of female actors, or of males in female rôles, one definite statement of the facts is better than many chance references; so for the question of music, of stage machinery, of state regulation of the stage; so for the individual history of the minor types created by different actors. Specifically, for instance, there is the question of the term *commedia dell'arte* itself. If we agree that the proper translation is "professional comedy," or "comedy of the guild," it would still be interesting to know from documents the history of the phrase, and exactly how to refute the erroneous meanings that have gained currency. First of all, why assume tacitly that guild organization existed among the comedians? Or assuming indeed such a formal "arte," how do we know that the term arose in contrast to the *commedia erudita* or *commedia scritta*? It is apparent from known facts that the comic companies often utilized written plays. In the beginning the term could not have been used to distinguish the written from the extemporized drama, but rather to distinguish one type of stage from another. More probably the term grew out of the conditions of the theatre in the sixteenth century. There we find in Italy, as in France later, the profane stage in contrast with the religious representation. Granting the frequency of dilettante and society productions, the two types most affecting the popular patronage were the *compagnia religiosa* and the professional "arte." In the contrast between these two kinds of actors and performances, which is conspicuous, rather than between two types of comedy very much alike, it is more satisfactory to seek the origin of such an expression. The reasons for the later specializing of the meaning are obvious.

Nearly half this volume is occupied with the origin of the *genre*, showing the development of the *scenario* from the simple "piazza" entertainment of the mountebank to the conventional plot modeled on the imitative classic play. Improvisation is of course taken as the distinctive characteristic of the "commedia dell'arte." Both the popular and the aristocratic elements constituting the improvised drama are found in other countries than Italy. Why then is the "commedia dell'arte" so peculiarly an Italian production? Clearly there is some third causative element, and one to be sought rather in Italian character and in the conditions of Italian life than in any definite series of empirical facts. The theory of the superior "mimetic excellence" of the Italians, according to Dr. Smith, "begs the questions and falsifies the facts: it takes greater mimetic power to represent adequately Othello or Alceste than to play Pantalone or Gratiano." It is true that this answer begs the question, in the sense that it alleges a fact which itself requires explanation. As for falsifying the facts, it is not at all a question of Othello or Alceste, but merely of that "readiness of technic" required by the "commedia dell'arte." And here the fundamental fact in the discussion must be the clearly unquestionable excellence of the Italians in this respect. It is unfortunate that Dr. Smith starts with the feeling that this situation is "ultimately perhaps inexplicable." The two reasons she adduces—the absence of great dramatic geniuses in Italy and the peculiar position of the actors leading to a dominance of the actors over the writers and the public taste—form only a circle in logic: this means, in substance, that the Italians had the "commedia dell'arte" because the "commedia dell'arte" was all they had. We repeat, then, that this view of the question is unfortunate; for here, if anywhere, lies the problem of this *genre*, and it offers a beautiful theme, which had the capacity to vitalize Dr. Smith's whole conception of her subject. After all, what gives charm to her presentation, is her sense of the quaint naïveté of this ancient humor. But the subject has an appeal which is more organic. The "commedia dell'arte" fed upon a

popular spirit that is best described as gaiety; this explains the apparent frivolity of its themes. Goldoni, to destroy the *genre*, had only to inject into its vein the poison of a moral purpose; and its last vitality flickered out in the spirit of social reform that came growing with the Revolution. The analysis of this gaiety in its relations to the social system is the most pregnant esthetic possibility of the subject. The chief instrument of this gaiety is the play on regional types. Should we succeed even in dating the origin of Pantalone, of Arlecchino, of Gratiano, we would have then only an incidental detail concerning the vehicle, the *scorza*, of something deeper and richer, the Italian regional consciousness. The history of the "commedia dell'arte" is the history of the development of regional satire. Before the audiences of the extemporized drama, the Venetian, the Bergamask, the Bolognese, the various social types, stood out in clean cut features. We have to posit a well-defined conventional sense and reconstruct its intimate history before we can penetrate to a sympathetic grasp of this humorism. And passing from these underlying questions of substance we come to the problems of form. It is not alone a question of improvisation, but of the special competence for improvisation. There is first to be considered the element of supple linguistic materials that favored the ancient lyric tradition; and then the conditions under which this typical capacity passes over into dramatic form, perhaps we should say rather, is forced over into the dramatic form. For nothing is more conspicuous in Italian history, in Italian life, than the histrionic impulse. We find in Italy a strongly developed individualism reacting to an equally rigid local conventionalism. Out of this spring naturally tragedy and comedy, tragedy, when the individual breaks out in revolt and succumbs, comedy, when his harmless idiosyncrasy is planed off by the leveller of public ridicule. The best tradition of Italian acting has always taken as its norm the identity of the staged representation and the corresponding situation in life. If naturalness be considered the ideal of "mimetic excellence," then surely the Italians can justly claim some

superiority in this regard, a superiority which comes less from a "mimetic" sense, than from a fundamentally "dramatic" attitude toward life.

We should have liked to see Dr. Smith's marked sensitiveness and her fine scholarly method operating with this wider orientation in her theme. For the skill with which she has gone through her wide readings and careful compilations gives assurance of her capacity for treating subjects of broad reach with accuracy and discrimination. Perhaps with denser composition the present state of knowledge of the subject could have been more exhaustively presented in similar space. Books like D'Ancona's *Origini*, Moland's *Comédie Italienne*, Rossi's *Calmo* could have been more profitably exploited; books like Capasso's *Commedia dell'arte* and Molmenti's *Venice* could have entered the bibliography of the subject. Especially Dr. Smith could have handled her patient collections with greater pleasure and effect, with a wider acquaintance with Italian. For instance, when Trappola (p. 95) says, "It is enough to say *Tasso* and every one knows we mean *poet*," he is saying not that *Tasso* is the archetype of the poet, but that all poets are badgers. This is a common pun in Italy. I recall some verses from a Venetian satire on the critics:

O che Ovidii novelli, o che *Nasoni*
 Che vuol a tutti i altri dar del naso . . .
 Che gran Virgilii pieni de *maroni* . . .
 O che *Claudian*i zotti anzi struppiai;
 O che *Martiali marci* e d'umor pieni.
 O che *Tassi*, ben *tassi*, in poesia
 Solamente svegiai per tarizzar,
 O che *Testi*, ben teste da lavar
 Con quel saon ch'è stà lavà *Golia*.

Comare and *compare* (p. 191) do not indicate necessarily legal relationship, but merely the mutual right to use the familiar *tu*. *Raffioli* and *sbruffedei* (the last a humorous Venetian term, arising in the days when forks and spoons were luxuries) are hardly "mincemeat" (p. 106). The phrase "bu non è torriccia Ne la torriccia non è bu" (p. 37) plays about the name *Bo*, the School of Padova. These *contrari* probably satirize the theory of scholastic logic proceeding from definitions. As for

Shakespeare's Bergamask dance (p. 179) all hesitation may be removed by recalling that local names are regularly applied to various dance movements, *pavana*, *furlana*, *bergamasca*, and even perhaps *tarantella*. The most serious deficiency in this phase of Dr. Smith's work is her treatment of the famous passages on the charlatans and comedians in Garzoni's *Piazza universale* (pp. 34-5, 190-1), particularly important to her, since one of the essential novelties in her volume is her discovery of Jonson's indebtedness to Garzoni for a scene in the *Volpone*. Zan della Vigna's "performing monkey" is only a chimera of J. A. Symonds, created out of the following Italian: "la brigata scoppia dalle risa vedendo i gesti di simia, gli atti da babuino, le diverse scaramelle di mano che [Z. della V.] fa alla presenza di tutti." Then the translation runs on with a freedom quite unnecessary. The phrases *cacciar carotte* and *far caleselle* are replaced by suspension points; *dalle vintidue alle vintiquattro hore di giorno* are rendered "every evening from ten to twelve." The phrase *alterarsi di nuovo*, following *corruciarsi insieme*, is translated "changing countenance." *Bussoli*, "collection boxes," become "purses." In the following lines in Garzoni, *capire* should be corrected to *carpire*. Only a vague suggestion of Garzoni's spirited articles results from Dr. Smith's translations.¹

This book should serve as a model for dissertations calculated to answer the many objections brought against the doctor's degree. One can but feel that the author has come from the work with methods developed, sympathies quickened, horizons enlarged. If above we have suggested other possible ways of viewing the subject and noted some errors of detail, it is only the more sincerely to congratulate the author on a contribution highly creditable to American scholarship.

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¹ We may digress to add gratuitously to the chapter on the "commedia dell'arte" in France the fact that the celebrated name Jean Doucet is only an adaptation of the Italian Gian Dussetto, constructed on *giandussa*, as it were, Pimple-face.